

## **H. Res. 598**

### ***In the House of Representatives, U.S.,***

*October 15, 1998.*

Whereas the current financial crises in Asia, Russia, and other regions have involved massive depreciation in the currencies of several key steel-producing and steel consuming countries, along with a collapse in the domestic demand for steel in these countries;

Whereas the crises have generated and will continue to generate surges in United States imports of steel, both from the countries whose currencies have depreciated in the crisis and from steel producing countries that are no longer able to export steel to the countries in economic crisis;

Whereas United States imports of finished steel mill products from Asian steel producing countries—the People’s Republic of China, Japan, South Korea, India, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia—have increased by 79 percent in the first 5 months of 1998 compared to the same period in 1997;

Whereas year-to-date imports of steel from Russia now exceed the record import levels of 1997, and steel imports from Russia and Ukraine now approach 2,500,000 net tons;

Whereas foreign government trade restrictions and private restraints of trade distort international trade and investment patterns and result in burdens on United States commerce, including absorption of a disproportionate share of diverted steel trade;

Whereas the European Union, for example, despite also being a major economy, in 1997 imported only one-tenth as much finished steel products from Asian steel producing countries as the United States did and has restricted imports of steel from the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia;

Whereas the United States is simultaneously facing a substantial increase in steel imports from countries within the Commonwealth of Independent States, including Russia, caused in part by the closure of Asian markets;

Whereas the United States, through the International Monetary Fund, generously participates in a bailout of the crisis countries on terms that do not deter and in fact encourage them to export their way out of the crisis; and

Whereas there is a well-recognized need for improvements in the enforcement of United States trade laws to provide an effective response to such situations: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That—

(1) in accordance with rule IX, clause 1, of the Rules of the House of Representatives, it is the sense of the House of Representatives that its integrity has been impugned by the failure of the executive branch to expeditiously enforce title VII of the Tariff Act of 1930 in

response to the surge of steel imports resulting from the financial crises in Asia, Russia, and other regions; and

(2) the House of Representatives calls upon the President—

(A) to immediately review, for the 10-day period beginning on the date of the adoption of this resolution, the entry into the customs territory of the United States of all steel products that are the product or manufacture of Australia, China, South Africa, Ukraine, Indonesia, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, or Brazil;

(B) if, after the 10-day period described in subparagraph (A), the President finds that the Governments of Australia, China, South Africa, Ukraine, Indonesia, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, or Brazil are not abiding by the spirit and letter of international trade agreements with respect to imports of steel products into the United States, to immediately impose a 1-year ban on the imports of all steel products that are the product or manufacture of Australia, China, South Africa, Ukraine, Indonesia, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, or Brazil;

(C) to establish a task force within the executive branch to closely monitor imports of steel prod-

ucts into the United States from other countries to determine whether or not international trade agreements are being violated; and

(D) not later than January 5, 1999, to report to Congress on any other actions the President has taken, or intends to take, to ensure that all trading partners of the United States abide by the spirit and letter of international trade agreements with respect to imports of steel products into the United States.

Attest:

*Clerk.*